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NOTTINGHAM CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.
ADDRESS AT ANNUAL DINNER, NOVEMBER 7TH, 1907.

GREAT BRITAIN AND
. . THE UNITED STATES . .
. . . . NEED EACH OTHER.

BY

WHITELAW REID.



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HARRISON AND SONS, PRINTERS,
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ADDRESS AT NOTTINGHAM CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Your words of generous welcome are gladly and gratefully accepted, in the only sense in which, as I well know, they could be at all warranted—not as personal but as a convenient way of expressing your sentiments towards the great country I have the honour to represent. In that sense I am doubly proud to receive them. It is a great country ; it fills a larger place now every succeeding year in the world's horizon, and we derive pleasure from observing that it seems larger nowhere else, and is nowhere more esteemed than with the very people in whose eyes we would gladly look our best—those of the land from which we had our origin and early nurture, our institutions and our language, and from which has come so large a part of our composite blood.

It was a pleasure to receive your invitation. Nothing could be more natural than a desire

to come to Nottingham. There are a dozen reasons. For one to start with, any man who knows the magnitude and character of the industries centered here cannot but feel a reasonable curiosity to see the town that created them, as well as to see what they, in the course of years, have done to the town. It must be well worth while, for example, to see and get some understanding of a place that has over six hundred separate establishments and over twenty-five thousand workpeople all engaged in a manufacture that is also an art—in fact, one of the most artistic and one of the most delicate manufactures in the world ; while at the same time it rivals even this achievement, in extent if not in beauty, with a variety of its other products.

So, too, no man could recall the history of this town and county, whether in government or in literature, without the keenest interest. To us beyond the seas, who cherish the bill of rights and parliamentary government as the special and priceless part of the great inheritance we derived from you, it is a privilege to

see a place where English parliaments often assembled in the days when the Mother of Parliaments herself was young. Then again we get a lesson in the principles by which the world is coming more and more to be governed, in reflections that must spring from a visit to the spot where the first Charles began that momentous struggle, which in its unforeseen sweep vitally changed the British constitution, and has largely affected the course of National and Imperial development from that day to this.

It can never cease to be another attraction of Nottinghamshire that it was the home, while he had a home, of one of the most brilliant poets of the great Georgian choir. Tempestuous and lurid he may have been at times, but his achievement and his fame are such that, while genius commands homage, Newstead Abbey must always be one of the world's shrines. There is a very different kind of radiance, mild and sweet, shed on Nottingham by the youth sprung from your working classes, Henry Kirke White, who was cut off

almost at his dawn. He has left you a few pages that will live, the verdict of some noted men of letters of that period that he deserved to rank near, if not next to Chatterton, and the memory of your extinguished hope for a great career. Then again, one recalls the fuller flavoured work of another son of Nottingham, once enormously read in your country, and, if you will not think this a piece of Yankee brag, even more enormously read in ours. He too has left verse which the people will surely not let die, no matter what the critics of these later days may say about it. Two lines of this Nottingham poet which are known around the world, wherever the English language is known, might well be taken as a motto for the town that gave him birth, and a high summons to its succeeding generations :

“ We live in deeds, not years . . . He most lives
Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best.”

There is a more prosaic reason for American interest in Nottingham. We do business with you—do it on such a scale that we take a full fourth out of your export of the greatest of all

your products ; and a good large proportion of some of the others. There is another reason ; you do business with us, and do it on the scale that might be expected from a town whose manufactures are worth a hundred millions of dollars a year—if you will permit me to count in the money with which I am most familiar. In fact, I am told that you are so good a customer of ours as to take from us as large a proportion of your total imports as from any other part of the world, and probably in greater variety. The noted Nottingham hosiery itself is made up, as I have just been assured by the competent local authority on my right, on American sewing machines, almost to the exclusion of any others. The very operatives that run these machines come to their work shod with American shoes, and they are timed for the beginning of the day's work and for its end with American clocks and watches. You live largely on American breadstuffs ; you take from us the meats, canned and pickled vegetables, and even the fresh and preserved fruits you eat yourselves, as well as a liberal selection

from our bewildering variety of "breakfast foods," which presumably you feed to your helpless children !

Well, gentlemen, we are neither of us trading with the other out of benevolence or philanthropy. We are doing it on both sides mainly because we think we are thus getting the best and the most for our money. Now, if that be true, would not he who for spleen, or for paltry political demagogism, should utter a word or do an act to interrupt these advantageous exchanges, and the present friendly relations between such customers, be one of the most disagreeable as well as one of the most pernicious of public enemies ?

These however, after all, are merely local reasons for perpetual peace between us. There are larger ones. Have you quite realized that the British Empire sold us its products last year to the value of nearly seventy-five million pounds ; and bought from us in that same year of 1906 to the value of over one hundred and forty-one millions of pounds of our products ? What we sold you was in fact over one-third,

between that and one-half, of all we sold to the whole world, outside our own borders. Can there be laid before a Chamber of Commerce a more convincing or more eloquent proof not only that we need each other, but that we need each other's continuous, cordial and unshakable friendship?

Yet pushing such exchanges of products is a large part of what many people continue to confuse with what they call "commercial war!" I protest against the phrase as a libel on your pursuits, and on the purposes Chambers of Commerce were organized to serve. Could it have been this utterly fallacious and deceptive analogy between the healthy competition of commerce and the blind destruction of war which some years ago led your Professor Huxley to say that the exactions of industrialism were responsible for the constant growth of armaments? However that may be, and without disputing the dictum of so eminent a man as Professor Huxley, I am sure that there is another and more commanding exaction of industrialism. It exacts now more than ever

before a regard for the real interests of manufactures and commerce, and therefore demands, and from this time forward will demand, more and more imperatively that the chief use to be made of armaments, however much they may grow, shall be—to keep the peace. And then, rising above the plane of mere interest, I am equally sure that the highest aims, the best-considered wishes, the most earnest aspirations of our two countries follow the same line with their manufactures and commerce, and tend to exactly the same things—peace everywhere, goodwill to all, the increase of ordered liberty, a higher morality, a broader humanity, and the spread of a better civilization throughout the world.

Do not tell me these are beyond the sphere of Chambers of Commerce. They are of the very essence of your work. Commerce is itself the great explorer, the great civilizer, the great educator, the great peacemaker. Chambers of Commerce are its organized expression. It has been intimated to me, and from Nottingham, that perhaps they should be its legally authorized

expression. In some countries they are. It is not for me to meddle with the domestic concerns of the country to which I am accredited, and therefore I do not say one word on that subject. But perhaps, speaking for my own country, I may say without offence that if you had a little more legal recognition here, if your Government were in some way a little more behind you, we would on a late occasion have found it a little easier to do what we were anxious to do from the start—take your certificate of cost of manufacture and of fair export price as of equal authority with similar certificates from some Continental Chambers in the administration of our customs. The difficulty has been bridged, as some of you know, by special order of the Treasury Department; and so the certificates of this Chamber do pass current now in the custom houses of the United States.

Just one thing more. It has been an interesting thing for the official of a Republic, founded on labor and trade, to meet the only large Chamber—with a single exception, I

think the only Chamber in the Kingdom, which has a Duke for its President. You will pardon me if I take the liberty to mention it as a good sign of the great progress made in what after all, in the history of nations, is a comparatively recent period. We are not so very far yet from the days when it really was a biting sneer to call the British a nation of shopkeepers; and when it was almost a social disability, even in shopkeeping Great Britain, for a gentleman to be in trade. Neither are we so very far yet from the days when it was a doubtful credit to the peerage, and particularly to those of its highest grade, those who, as your own Byron phrased it, bear "illustrious names, renowned in rank, nor far beneath the throne," to concern themselves very prominently with details in the promotion and management of trade. Far different, gentlemen, is the lesson taught by your action here, and that of your President. In helping to enforce that lesson, your Grace, you are rendering a real service to these islands, a service in its way as genuine as that rendered by the great founder in England of your

historic house, when he served William of Orange. The lesson I mean, gentlemen, is the pregnant truth, more and more important every year to both our countries, that no people, at the stage the world has now reached, can be truly free and entirely great which does not through all its recognized and authoritative agencies, social and political, constantly seek to dignify and elevate labour and trade.

Meantime, gentlemen, whether you are legally authorized or not, I am proud to hail this Chamber of Commerce and similar bodies as colleagues of the diplomatic corps, colleagues more efficient than even the late Hague Conference, in the work of preserving peace between ourselves, and extending it as far and as fast as we can throughout the world. In following then the directions on your programme by closing with a toast, I propose "The health and prosperity of my colleagues, the Nottingham Chamber of Commerce."

APPENDIX.

THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR IN NOTTINGHAM : CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BANQUET.

From the NOTTINGHAM GUARDIAN, 8th November, 1907.

By the medium of its Chamber of Commerce, whose guest he was, Nottingham last night honoured the distinguished journalist, soldier, statesman and diplomat, who represents the great American Republic in England. The Hon. Whitelaw Reid's association with the old country dates back for many years. He was his country's special Ambassador on the occasion of the late Queen's Diamond Jubilee ; he came again in 1902 to represent the land of "Stars and Stripes" at the Coronation of King Edward, and since 1905 he has been the ideal embodiment at the American Embassy of the "union of hearts" between the two great English-speaking peoples, which has waxed stronger and more enduring with the passage of the years. There was something appropriate, too, in the fact that the American Ambassador should have honoured the Nottingham Chamber of Commerce by consenting to attend their banquet, for the city has for many years been in close contact in commercial enterprise and interchange with the United States.

It was a distinguished company, representative alike of the city and county, which assembled in the Exchange Hall last evening to give his Excellency greeting. Much to the gratification of the council and members of the Chamber, their president, his Grace the Duke of Portland, who is the Hon. Whitelaw Reid's host during his brief

stay in the county, was able to fulfil a long-standing promise and to occupy the chair. His Grace was supported on the right by the Hon. Whitelaw Reid, Bishop Hamilton Baynes, Sir Henry Cotton, M.P., Mr. Arthur Richardson, M.P., the Sheriff (Councillor F. Ball), and Sir John Bingham (Sheffield), and on the left by the Mayor (Ald. J. A. H. Green), Mr. T. A. Hill (chairman of the council), Mr. T. P. Barber (the High Sheriff of Notts.), the Bishop of Nottingham (Dr. Brindle, D.S.O.), Sir Samuel Johnson (the Town Clerk), Mr. F. W. Mahin (United States Consul), Colonel L. Rolleston, and Major Ryan. The vice-chairs were occupied by Mr. R. H. Beaumont, Mr. W. Bridgett, and Mr. A. Durose, and among others who had signified their intention of being present were Mr. F. Acton, Mr. W. B. Baggaley, Mr. R. Barber, Mr. A. Barlow, Mr. H. D. Bayley, Colonel W. H. Blackburn, Mr. S. Bourne, Mr. W. H. Bradwell, Colonel A. W. Brewill, Mr. W. F. Bromley, Councillor W. H. Carey (the Sheriff-elect), Mr. E. F. Donne, Mr. R. Edwards, Mr. George Fellows, Mr. R. FitzHugh, Mr. George Goodall, Mr. G. P. Goodall, Mr. C. W. Gowthorpe, Mr. W. Griffin, Mr. R. Halford, Mr. O. Homberger, Mr. R. Hutchinson, Mr. J. H. Jacoby, Mr. E. Kidd, Mr. G. B. Kohn, Mr. T. Leman, Mr. C. Lisser, Dr. Littlewood, Ald. Sir J. T. McCraith, Ald. R. Mellors, Mr. J. Meyrick, Dr. Paul, Mr. G. H. Perry, Mr. G. H. Perry, jun., Mr. J. T. Perry, Mr. A. Phelps, Mr. W. G. Player, Mr. Tom Potter, Mr. E. Powell, Mr. W. Roescher, Mr. H. Russell, Mr. H. D. Snook, Councillor J. T. Spalding (the Mayor-elect), Mr. J. J. Spencer, Mr. B. F. Stiebel, Mr. G. H. Stubington, Mr. H. Tolley, Mr. W. Wadsworth, Mr. H. Weinberg, Mr. M. Weinberg, Mr. C. E. Whitmore (Leicester), Mr. George Wigley, Major Wigley, Mr. C. H. William, Colonel J. Wright, and Mr. H. Wyles. The Exchange Hall and its approaches had been tastefully decorated with choice flowers and plants, and the scene when the guests sat down to the banquet was one of extreme brilliance. Earl Manvers, owing to an unfortunate accident in the hunting field, was unavoidably prevented from attending.

The banquet over, the Chairman submitted the usual loyal toasts, observing that after the announcement in the newspapers that morning—an announcement which was only a token of the deep interest which the King took in the affairs and in the welfare of his people—he was certain they would drink his Majesty's health with more than usual loyalty and devotion. The toasts were enthusiastically honoured.

Bishop Brindle, in proposing "The Imperial Forces," said he did not pretend to have Mr. Haldane's grasp of detail or organisation, and would not criticise the proposed change. He hoped it would prove a great success, because if it failed they would be in a much worse position than ever before. He did not wish to say anything disloyal to the Government, but as far as he could judge, they were allowing the present state of things to drift in the hope that something better would materialise. The bishop expressed an earnest hope that when Mr. Haldane's scheme was placed before the country in its entirety, it would not prove what it appeared to them, bits of organization, but an organized and living whole. (Applause.) The navy spoke for itself. The Queen of the Seas knew her place, and kept it loyally. The army seemed to be falling into a state of languor and sleeping sickness, which he regretted, and which it did not deserve to fall into. He had seen something of the British soldier from close intercourse, and learned to love him for the spirit of loyalty and obedience, and his readiness to face danger and death when a cause had got to be won. In these days men must be competent to defend themselves and keep their freedom, and if they could not raise an army by Parliamentary means, the nation must raise one herself. The toast, with which the name of Colonel Rolleston was associated, was cordially honoured.

Colonel Rolleston, in reply, said it was universally known that the trade followed the flag and that the flag followed our arms. He submitted, therefore, that it was the duty of all interested in commerce to support our arms. They were about to struggle with the preparation of the new territorial army under the presidency of his Grace the Duke of Portland, so far as Notts. was concerned, and he hoped

the new scheme would be a success. Mr. Haldane was so assured of its success that he had already disbanded part of the regular army to make room for it. Disagreeable things had been said, but those who had a hand in the formation of the new force would do their best. (Applause.) If, unfortunately, it should not prove a success, he was afraid there would be nothing for it but universal service. (Hear, hear.) They had heard it said British people were not sufficiently patriotic or courageous to stand universal service, but he believed it was the politicians who were too timid to put it before them. (Hear, hear.) Whatever politicians might do, however, he was confident the British soldiers would do their duty, and commerce would never suffer for the want of sacrifice on the part of the Imperial forces. (Applause.)

The Duke of Portland, in submitting the toast of the evening, "Our Guest," said it was with much personal gratification that he proposed the toast, and that he expressed on their behalf and his own the earnest hope and prayer that the life of Mr. Whitelaw Reid might long be spared, so that he might render further service to his country, and to the great causes he has so warmly at heart. His Grace trusted, too, he might long continue to witness the steady growth of those sentiments of amity and concord which now so happily existed between the United States of America and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. He felt the highest satisfaction in discharging the duty which had been assigned to him, the duty of asking them to honour the toast of the health of their guest, who had so greatly honoured them by his presence, and whom they so cordially welcomed to the city and county of Nottingham. An eminent man of letters of the 18th century, the renowned and somewhat plain-spoken Dr. Johnson, once said, "I am willing to love all mankind except an American." But that was happily not the sentiment which animated Englishmen to-day. On the contrary, with a cordiality which knew no stint, and no limit, they welcomed the distinguished American, Mr. Whitelaw Reid. They welcomed him as a Transatlantic kinsman ; they welcomed him as a friend to this

country, whom some of them had long known. They welcomed him as one who, by his writings, had exercised a potent influence upon the public mind. They welcomed him as a statesman whose career they had watched with no small interest, and they welcomed him as a diplomatist whose peaceful and conciliatory methods they most gratefully acknowledged. He came to them as the representative of the great Republic of the West, the great Republic which was the inheritor of the glories of the parent-land ; for England they are proud to think was the living mother of the great American nation. The honour of founding the American colonies belonged to adventurous and intrepid heroes like Captain John Smith, and also to the no less heroic and resolute men, known in history by the immortal name of the Pilgrim Fathers, who, in sore grief at the restricted liberties of their native land, with quiet, stern enthusiasm, sought freedom beyond the ocean, and established tiny settlements in the wilderness, settlements that were now cities fair and flourishing, populous and rich. From this country they carried with them a spirit of manly independence, and this spirit they transmitted to their descendants, a spirit not unbecoming the grown-up scions of the parent stock, and a spirit that in the eighteenth century resulted in the constitution of the United States of America. Happily the pain of separation had long been forgiven and forgotten, and the motherland felt a just and a maternal pride in the great English-speaking nation across the sea. Of that great nation Mr. Whitelaw Reid was the representative, and his Grace thought he was right when he said that the principal object of his mission in England was to foster and invigorate those feelings of mutual regard and amicable relation, which he trusted might always exist, between two peoples who were brethren in lineage, in language, and in literature ; who vied one with the other only in the friendly rivalry of art and science, of invention and commerce, and in the noble endeavour to promote the advancement of the great interests of peace, of civilisation, and of humanity, which they each hold equally dear. (Applause.)

The toast was honoured with the greatest enthusiasm,

the whole company standing and the band playing the American National Anthem.

The Ambassador's speech was most cordially received throughout and constantly interrupted, often after every sentence, with applause. The toast with which he concluded, to the Chamber of Commerce, as a colleague of the Diplomatic Corps, gave marked gratification.

Mr. T. A. Hill, who acknowledged the toast, said they were indebted to their president for the presence of their distinguished guest. They were glad to have that opportunity of giving a most cordial welcome to the American Ambassador. They appreciated his visit all the more because the Government which he represented was the first to give an official status to British Chambers of Commerce by announcing that they were prepared to accept certificates of value of British Chambers in the Customs Houses of the United States. Therefore he thanked most cordially, on their behalf, the American Ambassador for the kind expressions he had used with regard to them and other Chambers. In proposing the toast of "The Mayor and Corporation" Mr. Hill said that the Mayor and Town Clerk had always assisted cordially and most heartily the Chamber in any resolutions in which they were interested, and they also had kindly allowed the use of the Exchange for the meetings. (Applause.) They were fortunate in having as Mayor a member of the Chamber, and in having as Mayor-elect one who was already an active member of the council. (Applause.) As they all knew, they had never had a more popular, capable, or active Mayor than Alderman Green. (Loud applause.) Though they were prepared to give a hearty welcome to Mr. Spalding, they must very much regret that Mr. Green's year of office was nearly at an end. (Hear, hear.) They hoped that possibly he might consent in the future to bear the burden again. If he did there was not a citizen who would not be delighted. (Applause.)

In responding to the toast, the Mayor said that truly his was the salutation of one about to die—(laughter)—for within a very few hours that mayoral moth would have lived his little life of a year; another would have burst the chrysalis,

and his friend Mr. Spalding, having donned the red robe, would be flitting in the mitigated November sunlight in all the glory of a scarlet emperor. (Laughter and applause.) But before he entered into the great peace, the Nirvanah which awaited ex-Mayors, he wished to thank them for their kindness. No man had ever had greater cause to be grateful for the kindness of his fellow citizens than he. He thanked them, too, for the Corporation, over which he had been privileged to preside. The Council had just undergone its annual cure—(laughter)—a mud bath some people called it. (Renewed laughter.) It was not for him to say whether it had gained or lost in weight, but he hoped its energies were unassailed, and that its vigour was sufficient to cope with the trials and troubles of the wicked world of local government. Having expressed deep gratitude to the American Ambassador for his gracious and eloquent appreciation of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire and its sons, the Mayor went on to observe that those who knew the history of the city knew how gradual had been the growth of local institutions, how from the fringe round the fortress and the villages clustering round it it became a centre of primitive commerce, the market for the products of the countryside, and afterwards the centre for the handicrafts of the middle ages. Later on, when the industrial revolution came upon them, it brought both turmoil and prosperity, while eventually the borough and the surrounding townships stretched out their tendrils to each other until there came unity of life. Far away in the long ago, Royal charters gave them their first self government, and made them a county within their own borders. They gave them the choice of their own chief officials, and in the fulness of time they received the great powers that Parliament bestowed. Whether for good or evil, they were a self-controlled community, whole, rounded, and complete. The gradual growth of their corporate activity taught the lesson that humanity, collective men and women were not the raw material for the building of a machine, but an organism, developing with the passing years, modifying and enlarging its functions to meet the needs of the day. From the primitive duties they passed on to the greater problems

of health, of education, and of collective industry, and all that went to make up the life of the city, and they had endeavoured as citizens to become worthy of the heritage into which they had entered. The task of the municipality was a great one. It was concerned with the destinies of the succeeding thousands in the city and the responsibility was common to all the citizens. The task demanded the best and the strongest of heart and brain that the people could furnish. Much of that strength was lacking. Men shrunk from the rough and devious methods of election known to them all, and often hated by those who were engaged in public life. But after all, the turmoil of the autumn was only a small part of the civic life. To act for the people and to work with them was the price to be paid for the right to take part in the making of the city. He asked that company in whom there was so much of the needed strength of heart and brain to come forward in greater numbers to do the work of the community. (Applause.) Speaking as one who for sixteen years held his place by the direct will of a populous ward, he could not pretend that politics could be eliminated from the civic life, but he was sure that they could, with the general goodwill, be very greatly mitigated. ("Hear, hear," and applause.) And he did appeal, with all the earnestness of a dying Mayor, to every section of his fellow-citizens to take care that party did not further impair those great civic institutions that were their precious heritage. Nottingham was the first of English cities to found a University College. It bore as its motto "*Sapientia urbe conditui*"—"Wisdom is the sure foundation of a city." Might that wisdom be found in their counsels, and Nottingham flourish through all time. (Applause.) Concluding by proposing the health of the noble chairman, the Mayor said that the Duke was splendidly conspicuous in his high position, but it was not only the position for which they honoured him, but for his high conception of the duties of that position, and for his noble discharge of them. ("Hear, hear.") They acknowledged, too, the kindly help which the Duchess was always willing to give to the city and county. (Applause.)

The Duke of Portland, in response, thanked the Chamber for electing him as president, and, paying a personal tribute to the help he had received from the Mayor, expressed his assurance that Alderman Green and the other representatives of the city would give the County Association every possible assistance in connection with the new territorial forces. (Applause.)

A most enjoyable programme of music had been arranged by Mr. A. C. Walker. During the banquet Messrs. Henry Farmer and Co.'s orchestra, conducted by Mr. J. E. Pickerill, played an admirable selection of music, which included Winterbottom's fantasia "America." At intervals subsequently Miss Bessie Maude sang charmingly, and the Lute Glee Quartette (Messrs. A. Wright, W. Oliver, A. Price, and J. Sudworth) gave unmistakable pleasure with their excellently rendered part-songs and glees. Mr. William Ryde was, as usual, an efficient accompanist.



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